

REMARKS

Applicants have revised the abstract, modified the headings in the specification and amended the claims to remove multiple dependency and to change the “means” expressions in the claims in order to avoid the strictures on claim scope imposed under 35 USC 112, sixth paragraph. No new matter has been added,¹ nor has the claim scope been narrowed by these amendments.

Early action allowing claims 1-4 is solicited.

In the event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 350292002700.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: December 21, 2005

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¹ The deletion of the means-plus-function terminology does not introduce new matter because the Japan, where the international and original priority applications were filed, interprets such “means” language to cover all structures capable of carrying out the recited function and not just those structures disclosed in the specification and their equivalents as they would in the United States.